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CIA and Universities

A number of anthropologists have expressed deep concern during recent months about the involvement of some universities and individual social scientists in "counter-insurgency" research financed by the Government. Recent press reports of activities carried on by several universities in association with the Central Intelligence Agency have added to this concern. In the opinion of many observers events such as these threaten the integrity of the social sciences and trust in the disinterested scholarship and good faith of academic institutions.

Last November approximately 1000 anthropologists and students met in Denver during the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association to consider these problems, among others. Two days later the Association adopted a resolution calling upon the Executive Board and the secretariat "to explore during the coming months the widely ramified issues involving the relationship between anthropologists and the agencies, both governmental and private, that sponsor their research. Among these issues are those of access to foreign areas, governmental clearance, professional ethics, and our responsibilities toward colleagues at home and abroad, the people with whom we work, and the sponsoring agencies."

The study called for by this resolution is still under way, and the Executive Board will submit its report and recommendations at the forthcoming meeting of the Association, to be held in Pittsburgh.

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next November. In the meantime the Board, speaking only for itself and not for the Association, recommends that:

Except in times of clear and present national emergency, universities should not undertake activities which are unrelated to their normal teaching, research, and public service functions, or which can more appropriately be performed by other types of organizations.

Attempts to utilize scientific research programs, or use of the term "anthropology" or "anthropologist," to cloak activities with nonscholarly or nonscientific purposes seriously threatens the integrity of the discipline and the execution of legitimate scientific research. The criteria of legitimate scientific research activities include full disclosure of sponsorship, of sources of funds, and of the purposes of the research, and public reporting of results, subject to the proper protection of the personal privacy of those studied or assisting the research. The gathering of information and data which can never be made available to the public does not constitute scientific research and should not be so represented.

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